(e) whether Government are contemplating for their conteservation through public-private partnership; and

(f) if so, the salient features of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protects and maintains only monuments which are declared to be of national importance. There is no database on the number of monuments which are not under the ASI.

(e) and (f) Government has constituted the National Culture Fund (NCF) for channelising public and private resources for funding a variety of activities relatable to the field of culture which includes the maintenance and preservation of monuments, protected or otherwise. The NCF is set up under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1980. The initial corpus was contributed by the Government of India. The NCF accepts contribution from State Governments statutory bodies, Private and Public Corporate Sectors, Individuals, Trusts etc.

Digitisation of archives by ASI

3529. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY; Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was objection to the decision taken by the Archaeological Survey of India to outsource digitisation of the country's old archives of 1000 photographs to American-funded organization; and

(b) if .so, what steps Government are taking to overcome these objections?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Archaeological Survey of India had undertaken a pilot project for digitizing and cataloguing 10,000 photo archives through the American Institute of Indian Studies. There was no objection to this project.

Declaration of Thirukkural as a National Literature

3530. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to declare Thirukkural as National Literature;